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LETTER DATED 24 SEPTEMBER 1998 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CHINA, FRANCE, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement issued after the meeting which you had with our Ministers for Foreign Affairs on 24 September 1998. We should be grateful if you would have it circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) QIN Huasun
Permanent Representative of
China to the United Nations

(Signed) Alain DEJAMMET
Permanent Representative of
France to the United Nations

(Signed) Sergei V. LAVROV
Permanent Representative of
the Russian Federation to
the United Nations

(Signed) Jeremy GREENSTOCK
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland to the
to the United Nations

(Signed) A. Peter BURLEIGH
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of
the United States of America
to the United Nations

Annex

Statement issued on 24 September 1998 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council following a meeting with the Secretary-General

1. On 24 September 1998, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members met the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Kofi A. Annan. H.E. Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, represented the People's Republic of China; H.E. Mr. Hubert Vedrine, Minister for Foreign Affairs, France; H.E. Mr. Sergei Lavrov, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the Russian Federation; H.E. Mr. Robin Cook, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and H.E. Ms. Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, the United States of America.

2. The Ministers reaffirmed their strong support for the United Nations and for comprehensive United Nations reform. They welcomed the Secretary-General's Track One and Track Two reform packages and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. They expressed satisfaction with the work undertaken at the 1998 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of its functional and regional commissions and other subsidiary bodies. During the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, they will strive to complete implementation of measures already approved and to pursue further several Track Two measures which remain under consideration. The Ministers affirmed their determination to resolve the serious financial problems confronting the United Nations. In this regard, they stressed that all Member States should remain current in their payment of assessments.

3. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the reform of the Security Council through enlargement of its membership. They also expressed support for additional steps to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the Council.

4. The Ministers, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reaffirmed the universality of the rights proclaimed in the Declaration. The Ministers also highlighted the five-year review of the World Conference on Human Rights. They endorsed the Economic and Social Council's agreed conclusions on the coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

5. The Ministers stressed the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security. They reaffirmed that the Organization must further improve its ability to act quickly and effectively to address threats to international peace and security. They indicated their determination to continue to help develop the capacities of the United Nations in preventing and resolving conflicts including through conduct of peacekeeping operations. The Ministers welcomed the growing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in

maintaining stability and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. They expressed concern at increasing incidents of violence and interference with United Nations personnel and personnel of international humanitarian organizations. The Ministers called on Member States to safeguard the safety and security of all personnel of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations and to facilitate their freedom of access in the implementation of their missions.

6. The Ministers stressed the need for the international community to continue to reinforce its efforts in the field of disarmament and to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The Ministers reaffirmed the need for universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They indicated that the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty marked a qualitatively new stage in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament process. They reaffirmed their support for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and welcomed in this context the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament. They also reaffirmed the importance they attach to the fact that the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force in 1997. They stressed the importance of universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Conventions, the Convention on certain Conventional Weapons and to the 1996 Protocol on Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. They called for the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a ban on transfer of anti-personnel landmines. They called for an early conclusion to negotiations under way on a legally binding protocol to strengthen the effectiveness of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The Ministers emphasized the importance of a strong and reliable nuclear safeguards system. In light of this, they welcomed the progress made by Member States and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in negotiating additional protocols to the safeguards agreements and urged States that have not yet done so to conclude as soon as possible their non-proliferation treaty safeguards agreements with IAEA and to finalize a new safeguards protocol to permit implementation of strengthened safeguards measures as widely as possible.

7. The Ministers reaffirmed their Joint Communiqué of 4 June 1998 condemning the nuclear tests carried out by India, and then by Pakistan, in May 1998. They expressed their continued deep concern about the danger caused by these tests to peace and stability in the region. They reiterated their pledge to cooperate closely in urgent efforts to prevent a nuclear and missile arms race in the subcontinent, ard to bolster the global non-proliferation regime. To this end, the Ministers called on India and Pakistan to undertake serious discussions to address their bilateral disputes, and to implement comprehensively and without delay all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1172. The Ministers encouraged India and Pakistan to try to build confidence rather than to seek confrontation. They expressed disappointment at the lack of progress in discussions between the two parties. The Ministers reaffirmed their readiness to assist India and Pakistan, in a manner acceptable to both sides, in promoting reconciliation, cooperation and a peaceful resolution of their differences, including Kashmir. They urged both parties to avoid threatening military movements, cross-border violations or other provocative acts.

8. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to combat terrorism in all forms, irrespective of motive, wherever and by whomever committed. They emphasized the necessity to intensify the fight against terrorism at the national level and to strengthen effective international cooperation in this field. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the need to oppose concessions to terrorist demands and to deny hostage-takers any benefits from their acts. The Ministers expressed their commitment to ensuring that terrorists are brought to justice. Ministers called upon all States to take steps to ensure that their territory is not used as a safe haven for terrorists. They commended continuing diplomatic efforts to promote universal accession and adherence to the international anti-terrorist conventions and to adopt effective and legitimate means and measures, including new international instruments, in order to counter the terrorist threat.

9. The Ministers expressed deep concern at the persistence of conflict, both within and between States, in many parts of Africa. They welcomed the efforts of the United Nations, in partnership with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organizations and arrangements, to promote peace and stability and to settle conflicts by peaceful and political means. They also stressed the importance they attach to assistance to African countries in their efforts to enhance their capacities for peacekeeping and conflict prevention.

The Ministers welcomed the Secretary-General's report on Africa, which provided useful recommendations for national and international actions to promote durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. They urged all United Nations bodies to consider and, as appropriate, implement the recommendations contained in the report within their respective mandates. They welcomed the convening of a ministerial level meeting of the Security Council on 24 September 1998 to follow up on actions to implement the recommendations of the report.

The Ministers expressed deep concern at the deteriorating political and security situation in Angola, which is primarily due to the failure by the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) to complete its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol. They demanded that UNITA fulfil its obligations to demilitarize and to permit the extension of State administration throughout the national territory. They called on the Government of Angola to respect fully the legal activities of UNITA and the rights of all Angolan citizens. They called on the Government of Angola and UNITA to reject military action and to seek a peaceful resolution of the crisis on the basis of the Lusaka Protocol. They also urged all States to promote such peaceful objectives.

The Ministers expressed serious concern at the recent conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They called on all States in the region to respect the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and urged a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They emphasized the need for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to respect the rights of all segments of the population. The Ministers were particularly concerned about recent ethnically motivated killings and reminded all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of holding an

international conference on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region.

While encouraged by the re-installation of the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone, the Ministers conveyed deep concern over the atrocities being committed against Sierra Leonean people by members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the former junta. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with the establishment of a United Nations observer mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) to monitor and advise the Government and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) efforts towards disarmament, demobilization, and the reintegration of former combatants.

The Ministers remained concerned by the situation in Burundi and welcomed recent progress in the internal dialogue and the all-party Arusha talks. They expressed hope that these mediation efforts would produce a peaceful resolution to the conflict and that the progress achieved would enable a decision to be taken on the lifting of sanctions.

The Ministers expressed satisfaction with the deployment in April of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) to follow on and consolidate the results achieved by the inter-African force (MISAB). They supported its role in maintaining peace and security and creating an environment conducive to holding elections while the Government of the Central African Republic implements economic and political reforms.

The Ministers expressed concern over the continuing crisis between Eritrea and Ethiopia. They called for the parties to refrain from further use of force and to continue to respect the moratorium on air strikes. They also urged the parties to seek a peaceful resolution of their dispute in conformity with the decision of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity of 10 June 1998 and with Security Council resolution 1177.

10. The Ministers expressed their support for the activities of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and interested Member States to promote a comprehensive settlement of the conflicts in both Abkhazia, Georgia, and Tajikistan. They expressed their appreciation for the Russian Federation's efforts to that end and for the contribution made by it to the peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States. They expressed satisfaction for the close cooperation between the United Nations missions (UNOMIG and UNMOT) and the peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and stressed the importance of continued close cooperation and coordination between them. The Ministers also welcomed the efforts of the Co-chairs of the Minsk Conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to promote a resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

The Ministers called on the Tajik parties to complete the full implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, signed in Moscow on 27 June 1997. They called upon the international community to assist the effective implementation of the accords.

The Ministers expressed their concern at the stalemate in the peace process in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the deterioration in the security situation, especially in the Gali region, including attacks on peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States and United Nations personnel. They also called on the parties to the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, to engage without delay in a sincere effort to achieve substantial results on the key issues of the conflict.

11. The Ministers expressed their serious concern at the renewed fighting in Afghanistan, causing a growing threat to regional peace and security. They reiterated their support for Security Council resolution 1193 and called for its full implementation. They called upon the warring Afghan parties to implement immediately a durable cessation of hostilities. They warned against outside interference in the affairs of Afghanistan and called for an end to the external supply of arms and ammunition and the involvement of foreign military personnel. The Ministers fully supported the efforts to facilitate national reconciliation in Afghanistan through intra-Afghan political negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference with the active and coordinated assistance of all countries concerned. They stressed the central and impartial role of the United Nations in achieving a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. They welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General, including the appointment of a Special Envoy and the establishment of the Six Plus Two group of the neighbours of Afghanistan with the Russian Federation and the United States of America, and encouraged him to continue his efforts.

The Ministers stressed the importance of cooperation by the Afghan parties with the United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations, in particular, the necessity of guaranteeing their personnel safety and freedom of access in the implementation of their missions. The Ministers called on all parties to the conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to demonstrate full respect for the human rights of all civilians in Afghanistan, in particular women and girls, including their protection from the conflict.

12. The Ministers reaffirmed that the status quo in Cyprus is unacceptable and reminded the parties involved of the need to achieve a comprehensive political settlement in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. They supported an early resumption of a sustained process of direct negotiations between the two communities with full commitment to securing such a settlement and to cooperating actively and constructively with the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser on Cyprus, and others in support of the United Nations effort to that end. They further called upon all parties concerned to create a climate for reconciliation and genuine mutual confidence on both sides, and to avoid any actions which might increase tension.

13. The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the persistent difficulties in the Middle East peace process. They condemned vigorously all acts of terrorism and violence in the region. They called upon all parties to implement in full their commitments under existing agreements and to refrain from actions that pre-empt the negotiations and worsen both the political and the economic situation in the Palestinian territories, and to abide scrupulously by their

obligations under international law. They supported the continuing efforts of the co-sponsors of the peace process and also of the European Union and urged all parties to intensify negotiations in the framework of this process and on the basis of the agreements already reached and in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and with the principle of "land for peace". The Ministers expressed their hope that the negotiations between Israel, the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon could resume soon on a mutually agreed basis and in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. They urged all interested parties to avoid an escalation of violence and tension in south Lebanon and to continue to cooperate within the monitoring group.

14. The Ministers shared the concern that Iraq remains in contravention of its obligations under the Security Council resolutions and the memorandum of understanding signed with the Secretary-General in February 1998. All believed this situation to be totally unacceptable. They were unanimously of the view that Iraq must respond immediately to Security Council resolution 1194 and resume full cooperation with UNSCOM and IAEA. The Ministers noted that the Secretary-General had presented his view to Security Council members on the comprehensive review of Iraq under the relevant resolutions, as required in Security Council resolution 1194. They agreed that, once Iraq has resumed full cooperation as required by resolution 1194, such a review should take place and that it should address Iraq's compliance and what remains to be done under the relevant resolutions. The Ministers decided that they would work closely with the Secretary-General to bring about the necessary first step in this process - the unconditional resumption of Iraqi cooperation with UNSCOM and IAEA. In the meantime, they would consider how the comprehensive review might be conducted in accordance with resolution 1194. The Ministers looked to Iraq to respond positively, so that UNSCOM's work could resume and progress could be made towards compliance with the Council's resolutions. Only in the event of such compliance could the Council consider further steps, including in respect of sanctions.

15. The Ministers reiterated their determination to see the issues of Pan Am 103 and UTA 772 brought to a speedy and just resolution and, in this regard, called for the early implementation of Security Council resolution 1192.

16. The Ministers welcomed the successful holding of elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 12 and 13 September as another important step in implementation of the Peace Agreement and establishment of a united democratic, prosperous and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ministers reiterated the importance of full respect for the rights of refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in safety. They emphasized the obligations of all parties to the Peace Agreement to cooperate fully with the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The Ministers urged all authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to make further progress in fulfilling their obligations under the Peace Agreement. The Ministers commended the United Nations contribution through its mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force, to joint efforts to consolidate the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

17. The Ministers noted the successful completion of the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES) on 15 January 1998 but urged the Government of the Republic of Croatia to intensify its efforts to

facilitate the return of all refugees to their former homes. They expressed the hope that the United Nations police support group and OSCE would effect a smooth transfer of responsibility in October 1998. They highlighted the importance of a resolution through negotiations between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of the disputed issue of Prevlaka, which would permit the prompt completion of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka.

18. The Ministers expressed grave concern over the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and called upon the authorities in Belgrade and the Kosovo Albanian leadership to engage immediately in meaningful dialogue to resolve the situation through peaceful means. They underscored the need for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for an end to all acts of violence. They underscored the importance of the commitment by all States to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Ministers stressed that urgent measures should be taken promptly to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in Kosovo. Necessary conditions should be created without delay for the refugees and displaced persons to return freely to the places of their residence before the advent of winter. The scope and acuteness of the problem called for urgent joint actions of the authorities in Belgrade, the Kosovo Albanians and international humanitarian organizations.

19. The Ministers called for concerted efforts to tackle the causes of movements of refugees and displaced persons, expressed their support for the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and called for strict respect for the principles of international humanitarian law. They expressed concern at the numerous obstacles put to the delivery of humanitarian aid and called for unhindered access to humanitarian organizations and workers to all in need of it. They expressed concern at the growing number of attacks on humanitarian workers around the world. They stressed that perpetrators of these attacks must be brought to justice. Ministers called for a comprehensive approach to the security of humanitarian personnel. The Ministers welcomed the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs and expressed support for the work of the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

20. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to combat transnational organized crime and all aspects of the illicit drug problem. They welcomed the efforts to elaborate a convention on transnational organized crime and the recent efforts to revitalize the United Nations crime and drug control programmes. The Ministers strongly supported the commitments undertaken and cooperation pledged at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on countering the world drug problem. The Ministers commended the goal contained in the Political Declaration of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly to eliminate or significantly reduce the illicit manufacture, marketing and trafficking of drugs by 2008, and will do their part to make this goal a reality.

The Ministers welcomed the many regional initiatives and efforts to combat corruption, including developments that would ensure that such initiatives are effective. The Ministers recognized that corruption is both a national and transnational phenomenon that can threaten political stability and security as

well as economic systems. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of promoting and maintaining the rule of law in fighting corruption and bribery.

21. The Ministers expressed concern about the financial crisis afflicting a number of countries, especially developing countries and countries in transition. They stressed the importance, at the national level, of sound domestic policies, private capital flows, and appropriate functioning of markets as well as of a favourable and open international economic environment to overcome this crisis and reverse the marginalization of some developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries. They also stressed tne need for concerted action by the international community and. in this connection, called on all countries to adopt policy measures which are conducive to the stabilization of the situation and the revitalization of economic development. The Ministers reaffirmed that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. In this regard, they expressed the view that the United Nations is in a position to play an even more important role in coordinating development assistance to developing countries, in particular the least developed ones, as well as to countries in transition.

The Ministers looked forward to the special session of the General Assembly in 1999 on the five-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development, preparation for the five-year review of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities at the current session of the General Assembly.

22. The Ministers thanked the Secretary-General for this traditional exchange of views and believe that the continued close consultations between the Foreign Ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General are very useful.